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ABSTRACT

This booklet contains suggestions for suitable play activities for preschool children. In an attempt to answer the questions of homemakers and mothers an explanation of the place of play in a child's life, and some ways that an adult can help are presented. Also discussed is the vital importance of play in the total development of the child. Activity suggestions are described under these headings: Homemade Play Materials and Activities, Suggested Books for Children, and Community Resources. (SDH)

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PLAY

PS

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
SOCIAL and REHABILITATION SERVICE ☐ Community Services Administration

P L A Y

Physical Coordination

Mental Creativity

Emotional Self-Control

Social Relationships

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INTRODUCTION

Homemakers have often asked for suggestions for suitable play activities for small children in the families they serve. Not only have Homemakers felt this need as they observe these children, but the mothers have often asked the Homemaker what kind of play activities mothers can encourage, particularly those which do not cost anything. In many of the families there are very few play materials; in others very little variety in play materials; in many there is little thought given to what play materials are selected or why play is important in the life of the child and the relationship between these two factors.

This booklet is issued in response to these needs; it attempts to answer briefly not only the **What**, but the **Why**. The materials and activities suggested are at the level of the preschooler. They are only **suggestions**, and relatively few in number. It is hoped they will stimulate Homemakers (and in turn, mothers) to seek and explore further ideas and resources; more important, to use their own imaginations for creative play ideas applicable in each individual situation and to stimulate children to create their own play ideas.

Most important, it is hoped that this booklet will create an awareness on the part of Homemakers (which can be passed on to mothers) of the vital importance of play in the total development of a child.

PLAY: WHAT IT IS

"Play is not only the child's response to live, it **IS** his life, if he is to be a vital, growing, creative individual."¹

This is a far different view of play than is held by the average adult, very often, if he gives it any thought at all, thinks of it as something to occupy time "busy work". When a child asks, "What can I do now?", a busy mother is prone to answer, "Go find something to play with." And thus the matter is not considered, but dismissed as being unimportant by the adult.

Too, the word "play" presents a complication for the adult—"Almost a moral issue. Adults play after work. We play in the evening or on weekends or holidays. We play on vacation. Adolescents and school-age children play after school or in recess, on Saturdays, in the summer. For all the later ages 'play' is an escape from life. For the young child play is the whole of life. For the later ages, play is relaxation from work. For the young child play is his work. For the later ages, play is a change of pace. For the young child play is his steady pace—play is what he does all of the time, with everything around him. Play fills his working hours, play fills all his waking hours. . . Play is how the young child *should* spend his time."² (Italics mine).

"Play is the way the child learns what no one can teach him."³ Through play the child is seeking to learn who and what he is, what he can do, how he can relate himself to the world in which he lives: Things, situations, persons, groups. Through play he explores and acquaints himself with this world of space and time, of people, of animals, of structures, of things. Through play activities he experiences not only enjoyment but growth. A child at play is doing what to him is most important; his play needs to be both encouraged and respected.

"If 'play' still seems like a confusing word for summing up the significant activity of three to six, call these the years of peak imagination. They become good years if children have the time, the freedom, the materials, the companionship, the support from adults to be what they are not, to do what they cannot."⁴ These become good years if children have had the opportunity to *grow*.

Consider this modern parable.⁵

WHAT DID YOU DO TODAY?

WE PLAYED

by Ruth Cornelius

Once upon a time there was a village and in it were its children, its men and its women. One day into this village came a visitor, and he looked and saw many things.

"I should like to see what the children are doing," he said to himself.

There are many activities going on; it was difficult to see everything. But as he looked, he saw a child deep in a book, reliving the adventures someone had written down. And the child paused in his reading to look up at the visitor who asked,

"There are so many things going on, how is it that you spend your time reading?"

To which the child replied,

"I choose to read today, and I chose this book by a favorite author of mine."

The visitor continued to observe. He saw some children carrying all manner of objects. They are getting ready tables, chairs, food and happy surprises for others. Their activity must have made them weary, but still they continued.

"What keeps you going?" asked the visitor.

"Ah," said the children, "we planned for guests. We want to carry out our plans well."

Thus saying, they continued their plans and preparations.

The visitor continued his observations. He saw the child manipulate some of the materials and then he saw him read intently; and then he saw the child experiment again.

"Couldn't someone else easily get that to work for you?" asked the visitor.

"Perhaps," said the child, "But I *want to find out for myself* and to feel that I have discovered it for myself. I can seek and receive help when matters get too difficult."

And saying thus, the child went on with his experimentation.

The visitor continued on his way and saw a child painting.

"Why do you paint?" asked the visitor of the child. Scarcely audible, he heard her say,

"*I feel as though I must paint the beauty of apple trees in bloom.*"

Just as the stranger approached another group to find out what they were doing, he heard one of them say,

"*I want to stop for now.*" With these words he turned

and left his companions.

It was then that the stranger approached a group of adults.

"I have observed the children's activities," he said.

"Tush!" said some. "Frittering their time away."

"Work!" said others. "That's what they're doing! They won't work that hard when we tell them to."

"Play!" said still others. "Just child's play!"

With the adults still debating the work of the children's activities, the visitor returned to the groups of children

"Tell me," he said, "what did you do today?"

"We played," they answered.

And being a wise man, he contemplated upon what he had seen: he had seen children choose, and plan, and experiment, and create, and even terminate their own activities. To them, they are doing what they wanted to do, and they called it *play*. And the stranger saw that it developed their bodies, and minds, and hearts.

And it was good.

* * * * *

NOTES

1. Ruth Harley and R.M. Goldenson, *The Complete Book of Children's Play*, Crowell Co., 1963, p. 1.
2. James L. Hymes, Jr., *The Child Under Six*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963, p. 171.
3. Frank Lawrence, in the Introduction to Harley and Goldenson, *op. cit.*, p. v.
4. Hymes, *loc. cit.*
5. Ruth Cornelius, "What Did You Do Today? We Played," *Childhood Education*, Vol. 3, No. 7, March 1960, pp. 302-303. Reprinted by permission of the author and the Association for Childhood Education International, 3615 Wisconsin Avenue, N.W., Washington D.C. 20016.

PLAY: WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

The "fun aspects" of play are both obvious and expected as we observe a child experiencing enjoyment and delight in his play. While, too, we often note the absorption, concentration, and effort of a child at play we do not as readily understand the development that is taking place as through this play the child learns about himself and his world.

What is happening? What is going on here?

While children's play is primarily a learning situation for the child, it can also be a learning situation for the adult and a more valuable experience for the child if the adult is aware of the importance of this play to the child's total development.

A child's play influences his total growth: physical, mental, emotional, and social. Through play he strengthens his muscles develops his coordination and his senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch), and learns new skills. Play can stimulate creativity and the use of his imagination; it enables him to try out various solutions as he tackles a problem; it gives him the opportunity to practice everyday tasks of life; it provides a means to expend excess energy and for the release of tension; it helps him learn how to get along with people, both individually and in groups; it gives him an awareness of the values and symbols of his play experiences. The kinds of attitudes which he develops toward himself, toward others, and toward the world around him will influence his behavior in the years which follow.

"With all this to accomplish, the child must play hard—and he often needs help."¹

Adults can help, if when considering the need for a variety of play experiences which will help a child develop physically, mentally, emotionally and socially they will keep in mind the "Big Ideas"—the basic principles of normal growth and development.²

1. The child wants to grow.

While we readily see physical growth, the child's intellectual, emotional, and social growth is taking place whether we see it or not.

2. Growth has direction.

A child will tend to grow in a positive direction toward becoming a useful, contributing, and decent member of society as long as he is with those who guide and encourage his emotional and physical well-being.

3. Growth has order.

While there is a sequential *order* to the way a child develops there is not a fixed *time*. Children should not be rushed into experiences for which they are not ready. "Life is not a race. We must keep our eye on where we are headed [Adult maturity] and *at the same time* be glad we are where we are. Death is not the goal of life; living is."³

4. Each child is an individual.

While the order of development is the same for all children, each child differs in his rate of growth, his depth of feeling, the strength of his drives; each child has a need to feel understood and accepted for what he is, as he is.

5. Growth is indivisible.

The physical, mental, and social growth of a child cannot be sliced into separate parts; all of a child is involved in every experience he has, and this wholeness needs to be planned for.

6. Growth is uneven.

At times children seem to "stand still"; at other times they seem to experience growth "spurts". There may also be times when they seem to go backward for a time, but the overall pattern is forward.

7. Growth does not always glitter like gold.

There is a difference between behavior that is good for the child (that is healthy and important in his growth pattern), and behavior that is good for the adults concerned (that is pleasant to live with). Some tolerance is necessary for noise, for activity, for the child's being "messy" or becoming "dirty" as we learn to take children as they are.

8. Behavior talks.

What a child "does" speaks louder than his words ever can. "A mechanic listens for the purr of an engine. We have to listen for the purr of childhood.....Your willingness to give whatever a child's behavior shows that he needs is your best tool for producing a healthy child—a child who feels pleased with himself and pleased with others, a child who can live with himself and live with others."⁴

These principles have application both as we choose play materials and as we deal with a child at play.

* * * * *

NOTES

1. Ruth Hartley and R. M. Goldenson, *The Complete Book of Children's Play*, Crowell Co. 1963, p. 1.
2. James L. Hymes, Jr., *The Child Under Six*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963, Chapter 34.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 325.
4. *Ibid.* pp. 330-331.

PLAY: HOW THE ADULT CAN HELP

Long before organized verbal speech occurs a child's language consists of gesture, action, expression, and sound. Play is a means by which he can communicate his thoughts, feelings, and needs; his satisfactions and problems. Through play he reveals his emotional reactions, and how he handles his difficulties. An adult can learn much about a child's feelings of joy, hope, anger or fear by watching, listening to, and talking with, a child at play.

When dealing with a child at play:

consider how the child is feeling when suggesting a play idea:

excited, tired, bored, tense, irritable. Help him find suitable emotional outlets.

keep in mind that when sick or tired a child may like to return to the simpler play of an earlier age.

help the child choose an activity that best suits his interests at the moment and which at the same time is not in conflict with the activity of the mother or other adult.

help the child shift from quiet to active (or reverse) kinds of play.

see that the children are safe and where an adult can keep an eye on them.

Help the child get started—help him gather the materials necessary and get set up in business; play with him for a few minutes to help him get into the activity.

encourage rather than judge his efforts; it is the "doing" that is the most important part of a child's play rather than the finished product. "Doing" is a child's way of experimenting with his world. It is not important to him to produce a

'thing' in the adult sense."¹ This is his opportunity to master and to create.

points out limits clearly and pleasantly.

remember that praise and pleasantness aid learning. realize when the child has a problem; help him after he has gone as far as he can by himself.

give him five or ten minutes warning before stopping play so he will have time to finish or come to a stopping point with whatever he is doing.

observe his behavior for a pattern; note if there is a difference from the usual pattern which merits attention and/or concern.

Thus an awareness of the significance of a child's play can accomplish much. It can help an adult better understand the child's patterns of behavior, growth and development; it can accomplish improved relationships between the adult and the child; and it can develop within homes a greater degree of harmony and cooperation.

When choosing play materials or equipment, consider: what will this do for the child? and, how long will he be interested in it? Play materials and equipment should:

fit in with the child's present interests

be within his level of skill to handle

be within his ability to develop new skills

be usable for more than one purpose or for different kinds of play.

be durable.

do what it supposed to: perform as expected.

be safe to use.

NOTES

1. Boston Children's Medical Center and Elizabeth Gregg, *What To Do When There's Nothing To Do*, Delacorte Press, 1968, p. 19

HOMEMADE PLAY MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES

Art Materials

Cooked Finger Paint

2 cups flour
3 cups water

2 teaspoons salt
2 cups hot water

Mix salt and flour, add cold water gradually, and beat mixture with egg beater until smooth. Add hot water and boil until mixture loses chalky appearance. Beat until smooth. Color with vegetable coloring. Powder paint, available at the dime store, can also be used.

(Remember that as a child begins to use paints he puts on paper what he feels and thinks, not what exists in the world as the adult sees it.)

Boiled Water Paste

1 cup cold water
1 cup flour

½ cup boiling water
½ tsp. oil of cloves or wintergreen (optional)

Mix cold water with flour until it is of creamy consistency; stir gradually into boiling water; cook

over low heat, stirring, about five minutes. Cool. Add oil if you wish (oil is not necessary but gives a pleasant smell and acts as a preservative). Store in a covered jar and refrigerate.

(Small children at first like to just mess in paste, as smearing it on a piece of oilcloth or a cookie sheet; they will probably paste scraps of paper together before they use paste to "make something".)

Play Dough

Combine: 3 cups flour
2 tbsp. cooking oil
1 cup salt

Knead the ingredients, adding water as needed. Store in a plastic bag or other air-tight container.

Cornstarch Modeling Mixture

Mix in pan: 1 cup salt
1/2 cup cornstarch
Add gradually: 1 1/2 cup boiling water

Heat over low fire, stirring constantly until mixture is too stiff to stir. When cool, knead until smooth. This mixture can be colored with vegetable coloring if desired; add with the boiling water.

Games and Play Ideas Using Common Household Items*

Blob painting with finger paints:

Place several "blobs" of finger paints on paper; child can fold paper over, pushing paint around with hands or fingers. Let child describe what the blobs formed look like to him.

Potato printing:

Cut a potato in several shapes or forms. Place poster paint in a shallow container with a cloth or paper towel, making a "stamp pad". Dip potato, press onto paper (newspaper or wall paper samples can be used).

*Variation: adult or older child cut potato in half and outline a design on cut surface; cut potato away around design to depth of about 1/2", leaving the design raised. Help child dry potato on a cloth, brush only design with paint, and press onto paper or cloth.

*Starred items are more suitable activities for the older pre-school child.

***Paper cut-out designs:**

Fold a piece of paper into quarters, then once more to form a triangle shape. Let child snip the edges, making a lacy design when unfolded.

"Snowflakes" can be created by cutting paper into a circle before folding.

Face masks:

Using a brown paper grocery bag large enough to fit over the child's head, cut it off at shoulder length, help child cut eye and mouth openings, and let child decorate mask as he wishes with crayons, paints, or pasting cut-outs on it or yarn for hair.

Pictures from paper plates:

Child can create own design on paper plates with crayons, paints, or by pasting scraps of materials. Pictures can be cut from magazines or discarded Christmas or birthday cards and pasted on the plates.

*If holes are punched at intervals around the rim of the paper plate, the edge can be laced with colored yarn, string, or ribbon.

*Other paper plate ideas: cut one paper plate in half, place the front of it against the front of a whole paper plate; punch holes and lace the edges together, making a holder, when hung, for letters, pencils, crayons, string, etc.

Funny hats can be made by decorating with paints or crayons, or pasting on decorations; attach strings and tie under chin.

*An older child can make a clock by cutting out numbers from an old calendar, pasting them on the plate, and attaching hands made of cardboard, small pieces of wire, or pipe cleaners.

Scrapbooks:

Let child make a scrapbook from pictures he chooses from old magazines. The pages for the scrapbook itself may be made from heavy brown grocery bags, and tied together with yarn or string. Children of kindergarten age can find pictures relating to a particular subject (as: things to eat, things we wear, pets, etc.) and paste them on a special page.

***Cloth pictures**

Cut pieces about 12" x 15" from the edges of old sheets (a pinking shears makes a nice edge); after child has decorated each piece with crayons, cover design with blotter or another piece of cloth, press with a warm iron; design becomes permanent. The pieces can be combined into a book if child wishes.

***Macaroni jewelry:**

Paint short pieces of macaroni with food coloring, let dry, and string on small diameter shoe lace.

Christmas tree decorations:

Child can help trim tree with decorations he has made—strings of popcorn and/or cranberries; paper chains, cotton balls; pine cones (which can be painted or sprayed with gold or silver paint) hung on a string; cutouts from old Christmas cards hung on strings; paper snowflakes or those cut from the aluminum foil lining in food containers.

***Sewing cards:**

(For children around 5 years of age.) Using a 6" square of cardboard, draw on it the outline of a figure such as an animal, a doll, a piece of fruit, etc. Punch holes at one-inch intervals around the edge of the outline. The surface of the cardboard can be covered with colored paper or wallpaper scraps, if desired. Child sews through holes with colored yarn or string. Dip end of yarn in heavy starch or glue, or place cellophane tape around it, to make it easier to slip through the holes. A large blunt needle such as is used in needlepointing may be used.

***Braiding:**

Cut long thin strips from old blue jeans, towels, blankets, or nylons; fasten to a doorknob or the back of a chair and show the child how to braid.

Puzzles:

Cut from a magazine a simple, colorful picture; glue to cardboard; cut into pieces of various sizes and shapes for the child to reassemble.

Card Games:

Paste pictures of flowers, food, animals, etc. to cards cut from cardboard. Children match types of pictures.

Variations:

Numbers can be placed on cards for matching.

Sets of wallpaper patterns with distinct designs can be used.

Form lotto:

Cut forms of different shapes (as: circle, square, triangle, etc.) from heavy cloth, colored paper, cardboard, or other material. Draw outline of these forms on a full piece of paper or cardboard. Let child fit forms to outlines. Discuss with him the name, the color, the "feel", the pattern, if any, of the pieces of material used.

Variation: paste forms on sheet of paper if child would like to "paste".

***Number Lotto:**

Follow procedure for form lotto, using numbers instead of various shapes.

Salt or oatmeal box:

Choose buttons of varying sizes. Cut slits in the top of

the box to match the sizes of the buttons. Child drops buttons into box through proper-sized slit.

Variation: different forms such as a triangle, circle, etc., can be cut from heavy cardboard, and openings in the box cut to fit them; child matches form to opening as he puts each piece in the box.

Buttons:

Keep button-bag (or box) containing buttons cut from discarded garments. Child can "match" them, or arrange according to size, color, or number of "holes". An empty egg-cup or a muffin tin makes a nice sorting box.

Several children together enjoy "choosing buttons" spread buttons on table or floor, each child takes a "turn" choosing the button he likes best.

Or, each child can reach into the bag for a button, "grab-bag" style, then place it in front of him. As he has successive "turns" he hopes to match the buttons by kind, color, size, or number of holes until he has a certain number that are alike. The child who first gets that number of matching buttons "wins".

*Hat-Toss:

Choose some big buttons; place a hat on the floor; see how many buttons the child can toss into the hat.

Bean Bags:

Using a sturdy material (the "good" parts of discarded jeans, slacks or terry towels) cut two pieces alike, using an animal shape or geometric shape for a pattern; double stitch, leaving an opening for the beans; fill slackly with beans, stitch securely closed.

Hat's off:

Tie a yardstick or broomstick to the back of a chair and place a hat on it; try to knock hat off with bean bag.

*Ring toss:

Cut "rings" from a discarded plastic bleach bottle. Turn a straight chair (a "kitchen" chair) upside down, placing the seat over the seat of a second chair so that its legs stand straight up. Child throws rings at chair legs, getting as many "ringers" as he can. If several older children are playing, each leg can count so much toward a score.

"Duffie" bags:

Make a drawstring bag for the child in which he can store his various "collections", treasures, or play materials such as scissors, crayons, paints. The legs cut from old jeans or slacks can be used, or any other sturdy material.

A "rainy day bag" or "special day bag" can be made in which is placed a variety of items such as playing

cards, pipe cleaners, crayons, blunt scissors, paper, discarded keys, small animals or dolls or cars, coloring books, unused gummed labels or seals, costume jewelry, old pocketbook. Keep the bags for rainy days, or special days when the child must wait at the doctor's or dentist's office, at the bus station, or when he will be a strange place or with a strange person.

Train-ride (or airplane):

Three or four chairs in a row, or several large cardboard boxes, can form a train; "passengers" will need luggage and snacks for the trip; a "conductor" (or hostess) can see to the comfort of the passengers and inform them of "stops".

House or cave:

Place sheet, blanket or bedspread over card table, kitchen table, or large chair which has been turned over.

Play store:

Set up a store using empty food cans (rinsed out) and boxes, being sure labels are left on. Use buttons for coins and cut paper money from green paper or color plain paper green; a muffin tin or egg carton makes a handy cash register.

Water-play:

Place water (child will enjoy soapsuds) in a basin or sink; let child play in water with plastic or metal utensils (an egg beater is fascinating to a child, particularly if there is soap in the water; the top portion cut from plastic bottles make good funnels, the bottom portion good "dishes").

Soap bubbles:

Add a few drops of cooking oil to a cup of soap solution to make bubbles tough enough to float in the air without breaking. A plastic drinking straw can be used to "blow" the bubbles, or take a short piece of wire (about 6") and form an inch loop at one end through which to blow the bubbles.

A soap solution can be made by putting the small pieces left from bars of hand soap into a jar, cover with water, let soak and use as needed.

Story-telling:

Start a story and have each child tell "what happened next".

What's the name of this song?

Hum a simple, familiar song such as a favorite nursery rhyme. Child identifies song (he may like to have you repeat it and sing with you). Older children who can carry a "tune" make a game of this, each taking a turn at humming and having his song identified. (Don't worry if the melody or words do not come out just

right—when a child sings it's the pleasure of singing that's important to him, not the level of his performance.)

Music-makers:

Empty oatmeal boxes—make drum for thumping or tapping by taping lid securely onto box.

Empty salt box—place a handful of pebbles or rice in box, tape opening in lid securely. An empty coffee can with a plastic lid can also be used this way.

Pot covers or lids—make a cymbal by clanging together two flat lids.

Plastic or metal flour shaker or salt shaker—place a small amount of dry macaroni, spaghetti, or rice in

shaker and fasten top securely.

Wooden spoon—drumstick for cardboard drum, or can be used to strike an empty can or a pot cover.

Cardboard cylinders from wax paper or paper toweling—punch a row of five or six holes down the length of the cylinder; cover one end with waxed paper, fastening securely with rubber band or cellophane tape. As child hums into the open end and covers some of the holes with his fingers, the sound is amplified and different notes are produced.

Combs—make a harmonica by folding a piece of waxed paper or toilet tissue over teeth of a comb; child hums or sings as he holds covered comb against his mouth, the mouth held slightly open.

Don't Throw Anything Away!

Alarm clocks (discarded)—manipulation; taking apart.

Berry boxes—doll beds, storage for collections, colors, etc.

Cereal cartons—blocks, drums or tom toms, storage.

Cigar boxes—doll beds or other furniture; storage for doll clothes or hobby collections, colors, puzzles, etc.; cars or wagons; blocks.

Clothesline—hanging up doll clothes; horse reins; jump rope.

Clothespins—crib mobiles, dropping in a bottle or can, small dolls, building fences, just plain manipulating in many ways.

Clothes sprinkler—water play, sand play.

Cookie cutters—imprinting sand or play dough.

Corks—tiny boats to float; making animals or birds; carving; cutting and pasting for collages; stands for paper dolls.

Cotton socks—balls, dolls, puppets, doll clothes, strips for braiding and/or weaving; dusting mitt for helping dust.

Empty cans—stacking, sand play, water play, storage, playing store.

Flour sifters—manipulation; playing house; playing in sand.

Funnels—sand play; water play.

Lima beans (dried)—pasting; growing experiments.

Macaroni—stringing, pasting, making jewelry, sewing on cards.

Magnets—experimentation; picking up pins and nails; use to display art work on refrigerator door.

Magnifying glass: experimentation and examination of all kinds of objects, indoors and outdoors, including leaves, insects, snow.

Nuts and bolts—manipulation and experimentation.

Nylon stockings—doll hair, wigs, puppets, braiding and/or weaving.

Oilcloth—scrapbook pages, place-mats, play tablecloths, patterned oilcloth for cutouts for pictures or wall decorations.

Padlock and key—manipulation and experimentation.

Paper bags—coloring, cutting, painting, pasting, hats, masks puppets.

Paper doilies—coloring or painting designs; special day cards such as birthday or valentines; doll skirts and hats; fans.

Plastic sheet or tablecloth—puncho for water play; protect floor or furniture when using paints or clay.

Shoe boxes—doll furniture, doll houses, storage for doll clothes or hobby collections, shadow boxes, garages.

Shoelaces—stringing objects; practicing lacing and/or trying shoes.

Sieves—sand play; water play.

Soap pieces—water play; solution for blowing bubbles; washing doll clothes.

Sponges—bath toys; water play; printing with paints.

Spools—blocks, pull toys, stringing, dangle toys, in making doll furniture, spool knitting.

Sweet potatoes—growing experiments.

Tablecloths, bed covers, sheets—costumes, caves, houses.

Table leaves—bridges, roads, fences.

Tape measures—experimentation, horse reins.

Women's clothing—dress up; playing house; doll clothes; playing "show".

Wooden spoons—hanging toys; drumsticks, sand play.

SUGGESTED BOOKS FOR PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

"Books are keys to wisdom's treasures;
Books are gates to lands of pleasure;
Books are paths that upward lead;
Books are friends. Come, let us read."

A story can entertain, soothe, or reassure a child. It can stimulate his imagination and curiosity.

Small children like stories about familiar, everyday happenings; or about children of the same age. They like repetition of sounds, words or phrases within the text. Select books which present a story in a simple, direct manner, and which have pictures which are clear and related to the text.

A child likes to browse through his books from time to time. If possible his books should be kept where he can do so when he feels like it. As he becomes older he will not only like to be read to, but he will like to retell a story in his own way; he also begins to tell his own stories about things he has done or seen.

The books suggested will be found in most public libraries, and were selected on the basis of the wide range of interests they represent at the various age levels. It is wise to include a variety of reading experiences for a child as not only will this practice serve to "broaden his horizons" in many directions, but children differ in their response to different kinds of books.

While the books have been grouped by age, the listings should be considered as only a guide. Children will differ in their readiness for a particular book; too, many of the books appeal to children in a wide range of age.

Libraries carry many books not listed here, some of which children have enjoyed as favorites throughout the years, some of which will be new. The librarian will be happy to suggest books which will appeal to the particular interests of a child.

Ages Two and Three

ABC, Bruno Munari (World Publishing Co.)
A Child's Goodnight Book, Margaret Wise Brown (William R. Scott)
Angus and the Cat, Marjorie Flack (Doubleday)
Angus Lost, Marjorie Flack (Doubleday)
Animals Everywhere, Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire (Doubleday)
Ask Mr. Bear, Marjorie Flack (Macmillan)
Book of Nursery and Mother Goose Rhymes, Margeurite De Angeli (Doubleday)
Chicken Little Count to Ten, Margaret Friskey (Children's Press)
Cowboy Small, Lois Lenski (Henry Z. Walck)
Everybody Has a House, Mary McBurney Green (William R. Scott)
Goodnight Moon, Margaret Wise Brown (Harper and Row)
I Like Winter, Lois Lenski (Henry Z. Walck)
Lavender's Blue, Kathleen Lines (Franklin Watts)
My Baby Brother, Patsy Scarry (Golden Press)
My Teddy Bear, Patsy Scarry (Golden Press)
Now It's Fall, Lois Lenski (Henry Z. Walck)
Off to Bed, Maud and Miska Petersham (Macmillan)
Red Light, Green Light, Golden McDonald (Doubleday)
Spring is Here, Lois Lenski (Henry Z. Walck)
The Animals of Farmer Jones, Rudolph Freund (Golden Press)
The Bundle Book, Ruth Krauss (Harper and Row)

The (City) Noisy Book, Margaret Wise Brown (Harper and Row)
The First Christmas, Robbie Trent (Harper and Row)
The House That Jack Built, Paul Galdone (Whittlesey House)
The Little Auto, Lois Lenski (Henry Z. Walck)
The Little Farm, Lois Lenski (Henry Z. Walck)
Three Little Kittens, Masha (Golden Press)
Time for Bed, Inez Bertail (Doubleday)
Very Young Verses, B. P. Geisner and A. B. Suter (Houghton Mifflin)

Ages Three, Four and Five

A Hole is to Dig, Ruth Krauss (Harper and Row)
All Together—A Child's Treasury of Verse, (Putnam)
Baby Elephant's Trunk, Sesyle Joslin (Harcourt, Brace and World)
Choo-Choo, Virginia Lee Burton, (Houghton Mifflin)
Come for a Walk With Me, Mary Chalmers (Harper and Row)
Do Baby Bears Sit in Chairs?, Ethel and Leonard Kessler (Doubleday)
How Do You Travel?, Miriam Schlein (Abingdon)
I Like Winter, Lois Lenski (Henry Z. Walck)
It Looked Like Spilt Milk, Charles G. Shaw (Harper and Row)
Johnny Crow's Garden, Leslie Brooke (Frederick Warne)
Mrs. Tiggy Winkle, Beatrix Potter (Frederick Warne)
Policeman Small, Lois Lenski (Henry Z. Walck)

Shapes, Miriam Schlein (Scott)
Snipp, Snapp, Snurr, and the Red Shoes, Maj Lindman (Whitman)
Thank You - You're Welcome, Louis Slobodkin (vanguard)
The Box With Red Wheels, Maud and Miska Petersham (Macmillan)
The Listening Walk, Paul Showers and Aliki (Thomas Y. Crowell)
The Little Airplane, Lois Lenski (Henry Z. Walck)
The Night Before Christmas, Clement C. Moore (Golden Press)
The Runaway Bunny, Margaret Wise Brown (Harper and Row)
The Snowy Day, Ezra Jack Keats (Viking)
The Tale of Peter Rabbit, Beatrix Potter (Frederick Warne)
The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin, Beatrix Potter (Frederick Warne)
The Very Little Boy, Phyllis Krasilovsky (Doubleday)
The Very Little Girl, Phyllis Krasilovsky (Doubleday)
The Wet World, Norma Simon (J.B. Lippincott)
The Whirly Bird, Dimitri Varley (Alfred A. Knopf)
Timid Timothy, Gweneira Williams (William R. Scott)
What is Big?, H. R. Wing (Holt, Rinehart and Winston)
Where Does Everyone Go?, Aileen Fisher (Thomas Y. Crowell)
Willie's Adventures, Margaret Wise Brown (William R. Scott)

Ages Four, Five and Six

A Child's Garden of Verses, Robert Louis Stevenson (Henry Z. Walck)
All About Dogs, Dogs, Dogs, Grace Skaar (William R. Scott)
April's Kittens, Clare Turlay Newberry (Harper and Row)
Around the Year, Tasha Tudor (Henry Z. Walck)
Brown Cow Farm, Dahlov Ipcar (Doubleday)
Do You Hear What I Hear?, Helen Borten (Abelard-Schuman)

Going Barefoot, Aileen Fisher (Thomas Y. Crowell)
Harry, the Dirty Dog, Gene Zion and Margaret Bloy Graham (Harper and Row)
How Big is Big?, Herman and Nina Schneider (William R. Scott)
I Had a Penny, Audrey Chalmers (Viking)
'I Can't Said the Ant', Polly Cameron (Coward-McCann)
I Want to be a Farmer, I. and G. Wilde (Children's Press)
I Want to be a Truckdriver, I. and G. Wilde (Children's Press)
Let's Go Outdoors, Harriet E. Huntington (Doubleday)
Little Boy Brown, Isabel Harris (J. B. Lippincott)
Little Black Sambo, Helen Bannerman (Platt and Munk)
Little Toot, Hardy Gramatky
Love is a Special Way of Feeling, Joan Walsh Anglund (Harcourt, Brace and World)
Mickey's Magnet, Franklyn Branley and Eleanore Vaughn (Thomas Y. Crowell)
Millions of Cats, Wanda Gag (Coward-McCan)
Peter Churchmouse, Margot Austin (E. P. Dutton)
Ted and Nina Go to the Grocery Store, Marguerite De Angeli (Doubleday)
The Big Snow, Berta and Elmer Hader (Macmillan)
The Owl and the Pussy-Cat, Edward Lear (Doubleday)
The School Bus Picnic, Aaron Fine (Holt, Rinehart and Winston)
The Three Pigs, William Pene du Bois (Viking)
Timothy Turtle, Al Graham (Viking)
Two Is a Team, Lorraine and Jerrold Beim (Harcourt, Brace and World)
When It Rained Cats and Dogs, Nancy Byrd Turner (J. B. Lippincott)
White Snow, Bright Snow, Alvin Tresselt (Lothrop, Lee)

Magazines for Children

Ages 4-6: *Humpty Dumpty*
 Ages 5-10: *Child Life*
Children's Playmate
Jack and Jill

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

What does your community have to offer? Explore it for ideas and help in providing play materials and activities for young children.

The public library is probably the best known and most used community facility. In addition to loaning books, many libraries offer other services of which the public is not so aware. Children's magazines are usually available through the library. Story and music hours are often held at regular times for children; if the librarian has not done this, perhaps she would be willing to give it a try. Books of interest and help to adults wishing to learn more about children can be ordered by the librarian from the State Reference and Loan Library if the desired books are not available from this source. (If there is no library in a community an individual can order books directly from the State References and Loan Library, Box 1437, Madison, Wisconsin 53701.)

Another resource which does supply children's books is the County Library System, operating in about half of the counties in Wisconsin; it offers free library service to persons residing in those counties. Check with the nearest librarian to see if your county has this service, and if so, in which library its headquarters is located and which libraries offer branch services. Some of the County Library Systems operate bookmobiles which bring library services into communities where there are none. Again, the nearest librarian will know if this service is available, as well as where and when.

Churches sometimes have children's libraries from which books can be borrowed. Perhaps a church or civic group would sponsor a children's book drive and make these books available to you—just as they have often been helpful in obtaining clothing or household items.

Other community resources may offer valuable experiences for the development of children. Are there public playground or park facilities to which mothers can be encouraged to take their children? Is there a summer playground program for small children? Is there a wading or swimming pool, or beach, within reasonable distance? Where is the nearest zoo, or game farm? Is there a YWCA or YMCA or other civic organization, or a group of volunteers sponsoring a program of activities for small children—will such a group organize one? These organizations can arrange visits for groups of children to places such as dairies, farms, fire stations, police stations. The children in the families in which we work need to have their horizons broadened, and they need to develop positive attitudes toward authority figures. The mothers need help and encouragement in breaking into the community and making use of the resources that are there.

Ask questions—you don't always get a silly answer; sometimes the floodgates are opened. People are often willing to help if they know of a need, and the power of suggestion can be mighty.

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